



**Daniel 9:20-27**  
***The Messiah Is Coming***

20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

24 " Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

I want to break our consideration of this prophecy into two sermons, in the first we will be focusing on the introduction and overview verses (20-24), and then in the next sermon we will take a look at the details of the prophecy in verses 25-27.

Now if you want to know why I'm going to do that, I have three reasons. The first is that it will allow me to preach two normal sized sermons instead of one long one, secondly it will allow me to dwell on Gabriel's greetings to Daniel in more depth than I would be able to otherwise, and most importantly it will allow me to postpone any controversy to the second sermon, after we've prepared for it.

Now the second sermon will inevitably be a little more controversial than this one, because as I exposit the details of this prophecy I am going to be giving you what I believe to be the correct interpretation, but it is *not* the interpretation that is most popular in modern evangelical circles. I am going to be expositing this prophecy according to the interpretation that was held by the church until the advent of Dispensationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Up until that time, most evangelical and Reformed

interpreters saw the events in these verses as completed at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, but modern Dispensational theology teaches that a portion of this prophecy is still unfulfilled. I disagree, and I believe that the introductory verses will show us why that is the case. But that's enough of that, let's talk about what is happening in these verses.

From his reading of Jeremiah, Daniel has realized that the time of the captivity of the people of God in Babylon is coming to end. Very soon now they are going to be allowed to return home to Jerusalem, and so he has been fasting and praying for the deliverance of God's people from bondage.

Daniel's prayers have not been in vain, in fact we learn that as soon as he started his prayers God sent the Archangel Gabriel to fly to him with great urgency that he might know that his prayers have been answered. But Daniel's prayers are not answered according to what he asks. The Apostle Paul described God in Eph. 3:20 as He "who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" and here God is going to answer Daniel's prayers exceedingly abundantly all that he asked for. Now Daniel had been asking that the Lord Forgive his people for their sins, to free them from their captivity, and to restore his sanctuary.

Now what Daniel probably had in mind was that God would restore Israel to her former glory, to the state that she was in before her continuing rebellion against God caused her to be defeated and lead away as slaves into Babylon. You can tell for instance, that Daniel longs for the day, when the covenant would be restored, and that the terrible malediction - God's declaration in Hosea that because of their spiritual adultery Israel had become *Lo Ami*, that is Hebrew for Not my People - would be ended and that once again they would be His people and He would be their God. And they would worship Him in the Temple and His presence would once again be in their midst.

Because that is what the Holy of Holies in the center of the temple was supposed to be, the place where God dwelt in the midst of His people. When Solomon had dedicated the Temple in 1 Kings 8 the glory of the Lord had filled the temple: we read "***And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. Then Solomon spoke: 'The LORD said He would dwell in the dark cloud. I have surely built You an exalted house, And a place for You to dwell in forever.'***" But then after hundreds of years of disobedience and idolatry, Ezekiel has this vision where that process is reversed and the glory of the Lord departs from the Temple.

But God, sends Gabriel to tell Daniel that something far better than just forgiveness and restoration is coming. Daniel has been praying that the physical bondage of his people would be ended at the end of this seventy year period prophesied by Jeremiah. But Gabriel comes to tell him that it has been decreed that at the end of a period described in verse 24 as seventy sevens or *heptads*, God would complete the deliverance of His people from their far greater bondage, not physical bondage, *but spiritual bondage*, their slavery to sin. Daniel has been praying for forgiveness of his and his peoples sins, and God is assuring him, fear not Daniel, I will pay for your sins, and I will establish the righteousness of my people forever.

Gabriel is essentially coming to tell Daniel prophetically, the same messages he was going to deliver a little over 500 years later in the town of Nazareth. First to the virgin Mary, that she was going to give birth to the Son of God and then later to convince her betrothed Joseph, "***do not be afraid to take to***

***you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."***

I have met many people who have know that God is righteousness and holy, and that they are not, quite to the contrary they have known themselves to be full of sin. And they have wondered, ***how can I be forgiven?*** Some of those people, spend their lives trying to run from God. They are inwardly haunted, always trying to fill their lives with distractions to take their mind off of what they know to be the true state of affairs. Others have tried in vain to work their way to forgiveness, I've done terrible things they say, but maybe I can do enough good works to cancel out the bad stuff.

Martin Luther as a young monk spent several years in that condition, inwardly tormented, constantly doing acts of penance, going on pilgrimages, mortifying his flesh, and wearying his confessors. He would make a long confession and then a short while later be right back at the confessional, they would ask "*Brother Luther, what could you possibly have done in the short time since your last confession?*" But no matter what he did, the wounds would not heal, he never had peace with God. Luther once asked regarding Psalm 71 - "*Save me in thy righteousness' — what does that mean? I can see how God can condemn me in his righteousness, but how can he save me in his righteousness?*" But that question his father confessor could not answer.

You see Luther knew what everyone who knows their own heart knows, *God is righteous, but I am not, and no works that I can do can make me righteous – how then can I be saved? How can a sinner like me find peace with a holy God?*

Well Luther eventually, discovered what God was telling Daniel, *I will save my people from their sins, I will do this by paying the penalty for all their sins, I will cover their iniquities, I will reconcile them to myself, and I myself will be their everlasting righteousness.*

God even told Daniel how he would do this in verse 24, by the anointing of the most Holy. Anointed in Hebrew is Maschach, from which we get Messiah, and the Most Holy is the a way of speaking of the Holy of Holies, the inner most room of the Temple where God dwelt. Once a year, on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, the High Priest would enter into that room and sprinkle or anoint the mercy seat with blood. That ceremony pointed forward to what Jesus would do, he the Messiah, would by the sprinkling of His own blood, shed for us, make atonement once for all for our sins. As Hebrews 9:24-28 put it –

***24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;***

***25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another --***

***26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.***

***27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,***

***28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.***

Jesus' Blood and Righteousness would be the means of salvation and deliverance, and by faith in Him we have reconciliation with the father. That is how God could save us by His righteousness, by Giving it to us, freely by grace, through faith in His son. Every sin deserves death, and there is no place we

can flee *from God*. But what sinners like Luther, and Paul, and Daniel, learned was that the answer to that terrible sin problem is not to flee from God, *but to flee to GOD*. That by faith alone in the Messiah Jesus Christ we might be saved - ***For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21)***

Now God had been telling his people all the way back to the fall, Gen 3:15 - the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. Isaiah 53 reads like a summary of the Gospel according to John. And the sad thing is, there are still people waiting for the coming of God's Messiah, who think the prophecies are unfulfilled. When Menachem Schneerson the Lubavitcher Rebbe, that is the head of the Lubavitch branch of Hassadic Judaism died in 1994, many of his followers assumed he would be resurrected because they thought he was the Messiah, and some still expect him to return. Sadly for the Lubavitchers the books are still open. But what Daniel 9:24 tells us is that the coming and completed work of Christ was the end of all the prophecies that pointed to him. When you reached the end of a scroll you rolled it up again and sealed it. The prophecies are done, the Old Testament is over, all that remains is for the full harvest of God's elect to be gathered in and for Jesus Christ to return.

Let me give you two brief application questions –

1) Daniel is told by Gabriel that His Prayers were heard in heaven, that He has a reputation at the throne of grace, he is greatly beloved. He was no stranger in the throne room, he was well known, a man who as we can tell from his prayer knew his Lord and Savior very well and was constantly talking to him, or listening to him. Kids, Daniel was doing that from *His youth*. The first great test of His faith came when he was 14, and Daniel was well known in heaven because he continued on all his life in the way he started. Are you talking to Christ every day? Is He talking to you as you read his word? Is He someone you know to be your Friend? Brothers and Sisters, what is your reputation in heaven? Are you known there? Friends if I told you, I loved someone I never talked to, you'd say that's silly, and you'd be right. In the last day we read that many who professed Christianity will come to Christ but his answer will be ***"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*** Dear friends, do not be content to be known as a Christian, strive to know Christ and be known by him as Daniel was.

2) ***Do you have that peace with God that comes from knowing that your sins are covered and that you have been reconciled to God?*** Or is it still eluding you as it eluded Luther. Are you perhaps running from God, instead of to Him? Brothers and Sisters, Daniel, David, Paul, all the great men of the bible knew that their own righteousness would never be enough, they knew they needed THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. That is all you need to be saved. Faith Alone in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, is all you need to be assured of eternal life. But you must give up your own efforts and flee to Him, brothers and sisters, I know that on my best of days, all I can say is *"God, be merciful to me a sinner!"* But by God's grace, I know that all I can say, is all I need say. Because this is the Gospel – *Jesus Saves Sinners*.